

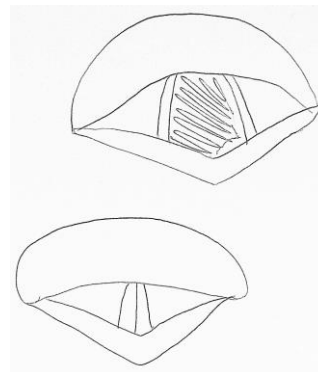
Pronunciation Phonemic Alphabet

Glottal Stops

A **glottal stop** is a **technique of connected speech**. We use it to make our speech sound more fluent. A glottal stop is classed as a consonant sound, but it is really an action – the sudden cutting-off of a vowel sound just after making it, instead of letting it run on. We hear a glottal stop as a short gap in the flow of speech, so it is really the absence of sound – for about a quarter of a second. It happens when we close our **glottis** (our **vocal cords** and the opening between them, in the **larynx**). The **air flow** is stopped for a brief moment, and the previous sound is cut short – clipped. It is possible to learn to control the glottis – to open and close it. Try holding your breath – you just closed your glottis! The glottal stop is very common in **Standard Pronunciation**. It is not unique to English, but can be found in many other languages, e.g. Chinese, German, and Arabic.

In **Clear Alphabet** a glottal stop is written as _ (underscore) which implies that there is something missing (i.e. an unnecessary **consonant sound**). By using Clear Alphabet we can see this kind of hidden feature of spoken English. With the normal **Roman alphabet** we can easily forget about the glottal stop, but if we don't use it our **pronunciation** is less natural and smooth, and **communication** is reduced. In IPA glottal stop is written as: /ʔ/

glottis open – we can breathe!



glottis closed – we can eat and speak!

We make a glottal stop when we want to remove difficult **cc sound connections** from our speech. A cc sound connection occurs when the final sound of one **syllable** is consonant and the next sound, from the beginning of the next syllable, is also consonant. For example, “hotuday”. We often use a glottal stop after **elision**. It is important to remember that we do not need to pronounce every letter in English when we speak. Elision occurs when we automatically delete a consonant sound (especially t) from the end of a syllable to make the sound connection easier. For example, in the phrase “a cat was playing”, the t sound in “cat” is automatically deleted by the speaker and replaced with a glottal stop: **uh Ka_ w Splei ying**. By replacing a consonant sound with a glottal stop, we stop the **friction** that would have occurred by the meeting of the two consonant sounds. Why can't we just use elision and not a glottal stop...? It is our habit... If you use only elision without a glottal stop it will sound very odd, e.g. **uh Ka w Splei ying**. The rule: if **vowel sound + t + con. sound** use **elision & glottal stop**.

It occurs when vowel + t meets another consonant sound, i.e. not when t follows a consonant, e.g. in fast car. In this situation, t is deleted (elision) and s moves forward (FCL): **Far Skar**. But see also paint pot = **Pain_ Pot**. There are many common words which will create cc connections when followed by a consonant sound, meaning that you are likely to hear glottal stops quite often:

- common **function words** that end with t : not, at, that, what, it just, out
- contracted negative auxiliary verbs with **not**: don't, didn't, haven't, won't, can't, wouldn't, etc.
- common **verbs** and associated **phrasal verbs**: get, put, sit, etc.
- common one-syllable **content words** that end with t : white, hot, want, wait, etc.

Apart from using glottal stops with elision, we sometimes also use them when we move consonant sounds forward (**FCL – Forward Consonant Linking**), for example in the phrase “Let's go”, we move forward s but we are still left with a cc connection, so we delete t and replace it with a glottal stop: **Le_ Sgeu**.

If you do not use glottal stops, your spoken English will not sound as natural and smooth as it could, because you are pronouncing too many consonant sounds, especially t and d. This will slow down your speech and mess up the **stress pattern** and the **sound spine**. Making a glottal stop is a physical action which can be learned, just like any physical action, e.g. clicking your fingers. Unfortunately, the glottal stop can't be avoided if you want to speak like a native speaker. It must – and can – be learned and mastered.

Note: in some accents of English, e.g. Estuary English, some people will use a glottal stop even when they don't need to, e.g. late night = **Lei_ Nai_** bottle = **Bo_ uhl** and better = **Be_ uh** There is no following consonant sound, but the speaker still uses a glottal stop.

Pronunciation Phonemic Alphabet

Glottal Stops – Exercises

1. Delete the unnecessary consonant sound (elision) in each phrase and underline the place where a glottal stop will occur. Practise saying each phrase out loud using a glottal stop, then say them without glottal stops. What is the difference?

- a) hot day c) not many e) that man g) don't worry
 b) got mail d) wet grass f) let them h) at night

2. Choose the correct answer:

- i. A glottal stop is... a) a sound in English; b) a very short gap in a sentence
 ii. Using glottal stops makes our speech sound... a) more fluent; b) less fluent.
 iii. We use a glottal stop... a) before elision; b) after elision.
 iv. We usually need to use a glottal stop because of a troublesome... a) t; b) p sound.
 v. We... a) can; b) cannot learn to control our glottis manually.

3. Write your answers:

- a) Where is the glottis? _____
 b) What do the vocal cords do? _____
 c) What can happen when the glottis is open? _____
 d) What can happen when the glottis is closed? _____

4. Discussion these questions with your partner or group and teacher:

- a) Were you aware of the glottal stop in English before this lesson?
 b) Do you use the glottal stop in your language? What are the similarities and differences in how you use it, compared with English?
 c) Do you feel confident about using glottal stops in English? If not, why not? How can you improve your glottal stop technique? Are you prepared to practise the technique repeatedly until you have completely mastered it? If not, why not?

5. Translate these phrases from Clear Alphabet to the English alphabet. Each one includes one or more glottal stops. Practise saying each phrase out loud with a glottal stop:

- a) Pe_ Ka_ wz... _____ d) No_ t Dei _____
 b) Ho_ Dei_ _____ e) Nai_ nai_, Jon _____
 c) Si_ Daun _____ f) ai Weun_ Geu _____

6. Delete the unnecessary consonant sound(s) (elision) in each sentence and underline the place where a glottal stop will occur. Practise saying each sentence out loud using glottal stops where necessary. Say them without glottal stops. What is the difference?

- a) Our cat got put down. e) We ate out late last night.
 b) Can you vote for me? f) The boat house needs a paint job.
 c) Kate wrote a short note. g) It's Pat's mate's pet dog Pete, dad.
 d) Bart bought some light wheat. h) No, it's not Pat's mate's pet!

7. a) Find twenty one-syllable words ending in t (sound) in the word search. b) Write five sentences with the words and practise saying them out loud, including glottal stops:

t	n	o	t	h	w	a	i	t	u	p	o
e	t	t	t	i	a	o	a	t	e	h	t
e	e	h	a	w	h	a	t	t	c	e	h
m	t	a	e	f	o	o	t	e	a	a	g
t	i	t	m	i	g	h	t	i	t	r	u
p	k	e	t	g	e	t	a	o	b	t	o
t	e	l	w	h	i	t	e	t	e	g	b

Answers to Worksheets and Notes for Use

<https://www.gov.uk/know-when-you-can-leave-school>

<http://www.themix.org.uk/crime-and-safety/your-rights/what-age-can-i-9102.html>

<http://www.themix.org.uk/housing/housing-problems/im-16-can-i-legally-move-out-of-my-parents-8069.html>

<http://www.deedpoll.org.uk/WhoCanApply.html>

<https://www.caa.co.uk/General-aviation/Learning-to-fly/So-you-want-to-learn-to-fly/>

101 – 103 You could use this material as the basis for discussion and/or role playing.

Pronunciation

106 1. i)

a) climb

b) cupboard

c) handsomee

d) should

e) government

f) two

g) mortgagee

h) talk

i) page

ii)

a) listen

b) honest

c) raspberry

d) lamb

e) bee

f) almond

g) autumn

h) island

i) above

2.

a) teacher

b) amazing

c) another

d) computer

e) popular

f) cinema

g) problem

h) internet

i) particular

j) current

k) nature

l) physical

3.

<i>Silent letter is part of a consonant digraph:</i>	<i>Silent letter is part of a vowel digraph:</i>
know psych <u>i</u> c wh <u>o</u> y	rai <u>l</u> n gu <u>il</u> d fou <u>gh</u> t wei <u>gh</u> t sea <u>l</u> t
<i>Silent letter is part of a pair of double letters:</i>	<i>True silent letter not connected to the word:</i>
bott <u>l</u> e redd <u>l</u> er app <u>l</u> e hott <u>l</u> er add <u>l</u>	chee <u>s</u> e fil <u>e</u> doub <u>t</u> que <u>s</u> tion grand <u>m</u> a hon <u>e</u> st comb <u>l</u>

4. Answers will vary.

5. The correct homophones are: a) read. b) Finnish. c) hour. d) inn. e) knows. f) too. g) be. h) no. i) way. j) I. k) knew. l) would. m) find. n) so. o) hold. p) told. q) not. r) buy. s) one. t) high.

108 1.

a) ho_ day

b) go_ mail

c) no_ many

d) we_ grass

e) tha_ man

f) le_ them

g) don_ worry

h) a_ night

Answers to Worksheets and Notes for Use

2. i. b). ii. a). iii. b) iv. a). v. a).

3. a) It is part of our larynx, in the neck. b) i) protect us from choking; ii) regulate airflow; iii) produce sounds when we speak. c) We can breathe. d) We can eat and speak.

4. Answers will vary.

5. a) pet cat was... b) hot date. c) sit down. d) not today. e) night, night, John. f) I won't go.

6.

- a) Our ca_ go_ pu_ down.
- b) Can you vo_ for me?
- c) Ka_ wro_ a sho_ note*.
- d) Bar_ bough_ some ligh_ wheat*.
- e) We a_ ou_ la_ last** night.
- f) The boa_ house needs a pain_ job.
- g) It's Pa_ 's ma_ 's pe_ dog Pe_, dad.
- h) No, it's no_ Pa_ 's ma_ 's pet*!

* could also end with a glottal stop

** no glottal stop; t is deleted and s moves forward

7. a) 11 across: not, wait, put, ate, what, foot, might, let, white, hit, get. 7 down: meet, kite (or kit), hate, meat, cat, heart, bought. 2 diagonal: hot, hat.

t	n	o	t	h	w	a	i	t	u	p	o
e	t	t	t	i	a	o	a	t	e	h	t
e	e	h	a	w	h	a	t	t	c	e	h
m	t	a	e	f	o	o	t	e	a	a	g
t	i	t	m	i	g	h	t	i	t	r	u
p	k	e	t	g	e	t	a	o	b	t	o
t	e	l	w	h	i	t	e	t	e	g	b

b) Answers will vary.

111 Note: you can access the recordings you need for these exercises here:

<https://purlandtraining.com/free-lessons/elementary-english-course/unit-3-0-health-and-the-human-body/lesson-3-3-intonation/>

- 1. a) Sentence stress is the sequence of stressed and unstressed syllables in a spoken sentence.
- b) Connected speech is the group of techniques we use to connect syllables in a sentence in spoken English.
- c) Intonation is the way we put emphasis on different parts of a sentence, using varied pitch, volume, rhythm, etc.